

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 AID-05 SAM-01 EB-07 /091 W

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R 070930Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2439

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OAU SO XA XF

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT SIAD'S WEST AFRICAN TRIP

1. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS: WE BELIEVE PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF PRESIDENT SIAD'S NOVEMBER 2-28 TRIP TO 14 WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES WAS TO PROMOTE SOMALIA AND SIAD PERSONALLY, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF FACT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR HIS HOSTS TO REFUSE TO RECEIVE AND HONOR CURRENT OAU CHAIRMAN. HE ALSO APPARENTLY WISHED UNDERSCORE FOR BENEFIT HIS AFRICAN AND PARTICULARLY HIS ARAB FRIENDS SOMALIA'S IMPORTANCE AS BRIDGE BETWEEN OAU AND ARAB; LEAGUE. HE WISHED GAIN SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENCE (AND EVENTUAL INCORPORATION INTO SOMALIA) OF FRENCH TERRITORY OF AFARS AND ISSAS (FTAI). HE PROBABLY TOOK OCCASION OF HIS TRIP TO ARGUE THAT SOMALIA IS GENUINE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRY, NOT RPT NOT SOVIET STOOGES. AT SAME TIME, HE PROBABLY HOPED TRIP ITSELF WOULD ENHANCE HIS IMPORTANCE IN SOVIET EYES. FINALLY, HE PROBABLY WISHED PROMOTE AFRICAN COOPERATION IN A NUMBER OF ECONOMIC FIELDS, BEARING IN MIND THAT SOMALIA, AS ONE OF POOREST OF AFRICAN STATES, WOULD DERIVE TANGIBLE BENEFIT FROM SUCH COOPERATION.

2. SIAD'S SUCCESS IN HIS ENDEAVORS IS SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT TO JUDGE FROM MOGADISCIO. WE NOTE WITH INTEREST EMBASSY DAKAR'S DESCRIPTION (DAKAR 6682) OF ARAB DISGRUNTLEMENT AT SIAD'S ALLEGED ATTEMPT PORTRAY HIMSELF AS AFRICA'S CHAMPION VIS-A-VIS ARABS. WE CAN WELL BELIEVE THIS, AS SIAD IS VERY PRONE TO ADOPT POSE WHICH HE THINKS WILL FIND FAVOR WITH HIS INTERLOCUTOR, IRRESPECTIVE OF ACTUAL FACTS OF SITUATION. HOWEVER, WE NOTE ALMOST ALL COMMUNIQUE SPOKE GLOWINGLY OF ARAB-AFRICAN COOPERATION AND OF RABAT SUMMIT, WHICH SHOULD BE GRATIFYING TO ARABS. SOVIETS, WE ASSUME, WILL HAVE BEEN PLEASED TO SEE THEIR ALLY CUTTING AN AFRICAN FIGURE AND PEDDLING SOCIALIST POLICIES IN WESTERN PART OF CONTINENT. FINALLY, SIAD MAY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN GETTING SOMEWHAT MORE APPRECIATION OF SOMALI POSITION ON FTAI. END SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS. CONFIDENTIAL

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3. PERHAPS MOST PROMINENT CONTINUING THEME IN PUBLIC REPORTING OF VISIT WAS ARAB-AFRICAN COOPERATION, PRAISE FOR RABAT SUMMIT, AND AFRICAN ENDORSEMENT OF ARAB

CONCERNS (PLO INVITATION TO UNGA, EVILS OF ZIONISM, ETC.). IDEA OF AFRICAN-ARAB SUMMIT ALSO APPEARS FAIRLY FREQUENTLY. WHILE, AS NOTED ABOVE, WE THINK SIAD'S

DESIRE PROMOTE SOMALIA WAS PROBABLY PRINCIPAL REASON
FOR HIS TRIP, WE THINK IT QUITE LIKELY HE GOT CONSIDERABLE
ENCOURAGEMENT FROM ARABS TO MAKE THE TRIP (ALGERIANS
LENT HIM A PLANE), AND THAT HE FELT TRIP COULD ENHANCE
HIS USEFULNESS IN ARAB EYES. THIS IS IMPORTANT TO
SOMALIA AS NEWEST MEMBER OF ARAB LEAGUE AND AS COUNTRY
WHICH IS CURRENTLY ACTIVELY SEEKING ARAB FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE TO MEET PROBLEMS OF DROUGHT, OIL CRISIS AND
ENDEMIC POVERTY. SOMALIA HAS DEFICIENCIES IN ARAB EYES
(CLOSE TIES TO GODLESS SOVIETS, FACT ARABIC NOT RPT
NOT AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE, FAILURE TO ELECT THEIR MAN
AS OAU SECGN AT MOGADISCIO SUMMIT LAST JUNE, ETC.),
MAKING IT ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT FOR SIAD TO DEMONSTRATE
HIS INFLUENCE WITH AFRICAN STATES. FURTHERMORE,
BETTER ARAB-AFRICAN RELATIONS WOULD MAKE THINGS EASIER
FOR SOMALIA AS MEMBER OF BOTH CAMPS. THIS WOULD ALSO
FACILITATEAFRO-ARAB SUMMIT, AT WHICH SOMALIA, AS THIS
YEAR'S OAU CHAIRMAN AND MEMBER OF BOTH ORGANIZATIONS,
HOPES PLAY MAJOR ROLE, PERHAPS EVEN INCLUDING HAVING
MOGADISCIO AS SITE FOR THE MEETING.

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4. ANOTHER THEME WHICH APPEARED MOST PROMINENTLY IN REPORTING ON VISIT WAS NEED FOR INDEPENDENCE FOR REMAINING COLONIAL AREAS IN AFRICA (INCLUDING FTAI). IT IS CARDINAL POINT OF SOMALI FAITH THAT SOMALIS IN FTAI SHOULD BE BBROUGHT UNDER GSDR FLAG, AND ACQUISITION OF DJIBOUTI WOULD BE ECONOMICALLY PROFITABLE. SIAD PROBABLY REALIZES PRESENT FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAS NO INTENTION GIVING UP FTAI. SOMALI PROPAGANDA HAS RECENTLY EMPHASIZED INDEPENDENCE RATHER THAN SELF-DETERMINATION, IN BELIEF INDEPENDENT DJIBOUTI WOULD EVENTUALLY FALL INTO SOMALIA'S HANDS IN MEANTIME, SIAD DOES NOT RPT NOT WANT FTAI PROBLEM TO BE OVERLOOKED AND WAS PROBABLY HOPING TO PERSUADE HIS FRANCOPHONE HOSTS TO BEHAVE ON THIS ISSUE AS AFRICANS, NOT RPT NOT AS ALLIES OF FRANCE.

5. ANOTHER RECURRING THEME WAS INTER-AFRICAN COOPERATION AND IN SOME COUNTRIES OAU CHARTER REVISION. SIAD PROBABLY GENUINELY BELIEVES THAT GREATER INTER-AFRICAN COOPERATION WOULD BE IN GENERAL INTEREST OF AFRICA. HE HAS SEEN BEEFITS ARAB UNITY HAS BROUGHT IN DIPLOMATIC ISOLATION OF ISRAEL IN AFRICA AND POLITICAL USE OF ITS OIL RESOURCES. HE IS ALSO DOUBTLESS CONSCIOUS THAT INTER-AFRICAN COOPERATION IN FIELDS SUCH AS TRANSPORTATION, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION MEDIA AND BANKING WOULD BRING CONCRETE BENEFITS TO SOMALIA AS ONE OF POOREST AFRICAN COUNTRIES. FINALLY, HE AWARE THAT ADVOCATING SUCH COOPERATION PUTS HIM IN GOOD LIGHT.

WE DOUBT HOWEVER SIAD IS VERY SANGUINE ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF MAKING RAPID PROGRESS ON THESE LONG-STANDING GOALS AND WE ARE CONVINCED GSDR AS WELL AS MOST OAU STATES NOT RPT NOT WILLING TO GIVE THEM ATTENTION THEY REQUIRE, INCLUDING NECESSARY FINANCIAL SACRIFICES. WE ARE NOT RPT NOT CERTAIN HOW LARGE A ROLE IN SIAD'S DISCUSSIONS FORMATION OF INTER-AFRICAN DEFENSE FORCE PLAYED, NOR WHETHER HE ANY MORE SERIOUS ABOUT THIS THAN ABOUT OTHER FORMS OF COOPERATION. WE ARE INCLINED, HOWEVER, TO THINK THAT THERE IS NOT MUCH HERE. WE ARE RATHER INCLINED TO THINK THAT OCCASIONAL REFERENCES TO NEED FOR OAU CHARTER REVISION REFLECT DESIRE TO GIVE OAU MORE AUTHORITY IN RESOLVING LONG-STANDING AFRICAN

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PROBLEMS--PRINCIPALLY BORDER AND TERRITORIAL DISPUTES.

6. WE NOTED THAT SIAD, IN ADDITION TO HIS PREDICTABLE CRITICISM OF US/UK/FRENCH VETO OF SOUTH AFRICAN EXPULSION, HAD KIND WORDS TO SAY ABOUT THE PORTUGUESE. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH HIS PREVIOUS STATEMENTS THAT AFRICA SHOULD BEAR NO GRUDGE AGAINST PORTUGUESE AND WITH SOMALIA'S GENERAL POSTURE OF BEING FRIENDS WITH (AND HOPEFULLY OBTAINING AID FROM) ALL COUNTRIES.

7. WE SUSPECT SOVIETS AS WELL AS ARABS MAY HAVE ENCOURAGED SIAD TO TAKE THIS TRIP. IT IS IN THEIR INTEREST FOR A SOCIALIST AFRICAN LEADER WHO HWF RECENTLY SIGNED A FRIENDSHIP TREATY WITH THEM TO CUT A PROMINENT FIGURE ON AFRICAN SCENE. HIS CRITICISM OF WESTERN POWERS AND PRAISE FOR SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM IS BENEFICIAL TO THEM. HIS ACTIVITIES AS AN AFRICAN LEADER TEND TO BLUNT CHARGES HE IS A SOVIET STOOGES, AND HE WAS DOUBTLESS AT PAINS ON HIS TRIP TO DENY SOMALIA IS CLIENT SOVIET STATE OR INDEED THAT THERE ARE ANY SOVIET BASES IN SOMALIA.

8. ONE PLACE SAID'S TRIP SEEMS TO HAVE DONE HIM LITTLE GOOD IS AT HOME. THERE HAS BEEN WIDESPREAD RESENTMENT AT HIS ABSENCE FROM COUNTRY AT TIME WHEN DROUGHT SITUATION GETTING INCREASINGLY SERIOUS AND POLITICAL TENSIONS HIGH. INDEED, HIS TOUR HAD ULTIMATELY TO BE CUT SHORT IN RESPONSE TO URGENT APPEALS FROM HIS COLLEAGUES THAT HE RETURN TO COPE WITH SITUATION. WE SUSPECT HOWEVER THAT WITH PASSAGE OF TIME THIS WILL APPEAR LESS SIGNIFICANT, AND THAT HIS TRIP WILL BE CONSIDERED NET PLUS BY SIAD AND HIS SOVIET AND ARAB FRIENDS.

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